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# verses from the Rockies



Arthur W. Montrose

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## VERSES FROM THE ROCKIES

Some verses there are with beautiful lines,  
Some with lines that are rank,  
Some that have lines that are mystic and vague,  
Others with truth are frank.

Here are some lines that I have set down,  
To pass away the time,  
There are some that are long, some that are short  
Some are just bits of rhyme.

If you like them you may stop to read them,  
Or put them up on the shelf,  
My rhymes may be good or they may be bad,  
You may read and judge them yourself.

## *MAKING THE BEST OF LIFE*

Are you the kind of a man that sits  
And loafes in the shade all day,  
That growls and kicks at the life he leads,  
And the hard luck that comes his way?  
Do you knock the rich 'cause they have the kale?  
And whine 'cause you haven't any,  
When you wouldn't do a hard day's work,  
Nor earn yourself a penny?

Do you stand around and criticize,  
The man who has won fame,  
When you should be hitting the ball  
And sharing your part of the game?  
The man that works through every day,  
And wins his game on the square,  
Is never the man who stands around  
And don't meet the others fair.

The world owes a living to no lazy man,  
Tho it gives him the right to live;  
But the man who mounts to the top in life,  
Is the man who can work and give,  
The man who is happy is he who works  
From early morn till night,  
The man who has a great big heart,  
And keeps on the path of right.

The rich and famous man you scorn,  
Might have been poor one day,  
He might have dug ditch or shoveled coal,  
And worked hard for his daily pay.  
And he kept his job and he won the game,  
Because he was willing to work,  
He did not win by loafing around,  
For he wasn't the kind to shirk.

Any man can make a living,  
By hitting a lick now and then,  
But plugging along and doing the right thing,  
Is the work that makes real men.  
If you can weather the storm of worry and grief  
And laugh through the bitter strife,  
Then you are on the road to success,  
You're making the best out of life.

### *MEMORIES*

When life's bright ports are dimming  
And the fading lights are low;  
When our fondest hopes are banished,  
With a golden afterglow;  
When the cares of life are left behind,  
And our days on earth are few;  
May memories of our youth return,  
And bring us life anew.



*WHO KNOWS?*  
(The Picture Rocks)

What humble dweller of the past,  
    Stood on this lonely spot,  
And chiseled out this sign to last,  
    This sign no time could ever blot?

What hand hath hewn this simple map,  
    And wrote this simple tale  
That some poor wanderer mayhap,  
    Should stray not off the trail?

What weary feet have trod this land,  
    And paused before this stone,  
A moment only thus to stand,  
    And then go on alone?

What weary eyes have pierced the dark,  
    And marked this sign of stone,  
To gain their bearings from this mark,  
    Where silence holds her own?

What rugged tale of ancient lore,  
    To fill unwritten pages,  
Is chiseled here and lies in store,  
    On the signboard of the ages?

Where is the man to read this page,  
And tell us what it shows?  
Some worldly wise and ancient sage,  
Make it known—who knows? who knows?

*TO A PACK BURRO*

Only a plodding patient burro  
Trudging a mountain trail,  
Faithful ever to his master,  
A friend who'll never fail.

A little long-eared donkey,  
Carefully picking the way,  
Almost buried beneath a pack,  
That gently seems to sway.

Where's a man with pal so fine,  
And friend so tried and true,  
As to carry all the burden,  
Like this little beast will do.

## *THE MOUNTAIN STREAM*

Dashing, crashing mountain stream,  
    Speeding down the hill,  
Ever rushing, pushing seaward,  
    Never quiet, never still.

Over rocks and over sand,  
    And under fallen trees,  
I see you running ever downward,  
    In the mountain breeze.

In your rapids I see fishes  
    Gliding to and fro,  
They are always with you,  
    No matter where you go.

You tumble over cliffs and rocks,  
    And through the canons deep,  
You are busy all the time,  
    You are ne'er asleep.

Ever dashing, ever splashing,  
    On your merry race,  
Some day you'll make the sea,  
    Your final resting place.



## WHEN THE STORM KING SPEAKS

When the Storm King speaks and the mountain  
    peaks, are lit up in the lightning's flash,  
And their heads are seen in a misty screen, mid  
    the thunder's mighty crash;  
The rumbling clouds in mystic shrouds, besiege  
    the mountain tops,  
And the driving rain o'er hill and plain, is loosed  
    in massive drops.

Then beast and bird by panic spurred, flee to a  
    safe retreat,  
And swaying trees in the strengthened breeze,  
    bend in the rain and sleet;  
When the Storm King speaks o'er the mountain  
    peaks, all the world below kneels down.  
The Storm King's hand rules o'er the land and  
    all men fear his frown.

## SNOWBOUND

Deserted and starving late in the fall,  
Snowbound and freezing far from a stall,  
Nature gave warning and stern is her sway,  
And death is the penalty trespassers must pay.

The strong hand of winter lay over the land.  
And white snow ever drifted like desert sand.

The figure of Death o'er the hills flew,  
And nearer and nearer and e'er nearer drew.

High on the hillside, 'neath o'erhanging cliffs,  
Six lonely carcasses buried 'neath drifts,  
Tell a mute story of hunger and pain,  
Where six horses perished to King Winter's  
reign.

### *A FRIEND TO MAN*

When you've finished the game of life,  
And you've got the goal in sight,  
And you've fought through grind and strife,  
And you've played and won the fight.

When you've struggled through mud and rain,  
And you've kept your head up and fought;  
Do you want it said that you fought in vain,  
And all of your work went for naught?

Don't you want men to say as they lay you away,  
And back o'er your life book they scan?  
"He went out of his way to brighten each day,  
For he was a friend to man."

## *A LIFE WELL SPENT*

An old man sat in his lonely room,  
Where the fading lights were low,  
And the old stone hearth was ruddy,  
With a golden afterglow.

His thoughts went back o'er a life well spent,  
Through childhood, youth and old age;  
Through his life book he slowly went,  
And turned it o'er page by page.

He held each deed up before his eyes,  
And scanned each task he had done,  
He viewed his castles in the skies,  
And the things he had left undone.

As thus he sat he mused to himself,  
As o'er life's by-ways he went;  
His thoughts at last settled and dwelt,  
On the joys of a life well spent.

He thought of the day when life should dim,  
His day of the setting sun,  
He'd want to have it said of him,  
"Well done, my man, well done."

## *GOD'S FLAGS*

High up o'er the mountain tops,  
Above the roof of the world,  
And o'er the winding valleys,  
Are God's fair flags unfurled.

There too up o'er the city,  
And o'er the deep blue sea,  
The banners of God are spread aloft,  
For the world below to see.

When the cheering light of dawn,  
Streaks out across the sky,  
His flags reflect the golden glow,  
As they float up there on high.

From the dawning to the evening,  
When the sky is a purple hue,  
We see the flags of God unfurled,  
As they pass us in review.

His flags are the myriad clouds,  
That drift out o'er the land,  
They serve His bidding night and day,  
And float beneath His Hand.

*I WONDER HOW HE FED 'EM*

Old Noah had a bunch of beasts,  
The Bible says he had 'em,  
But the thing it never told us,  
Is how the deuce he fed 'em.

He had two beasts of every kind,  
They went where e'er he led 'em,  
But what I've never figured out,  
Is how the deuce he fed 'em.

The horses had to have their hay,  
And straw with which to bed 'em  
And all the others; I wonder,  
How the deuce he fed 'em.

They'd likely all want peanuts,  
When on the deck he spread 'em,  
I'll bet they made a scramble,  
When e'er Old Noah fed 'em.

I often lie awake in bed,  
And bitter tears, I shed 'em,  
When e'er I think of Noah's brutes,  
And wonder how he fed 'em.

## *AN ODE TO THE BUCKHORN LAKES*

In the heart of Sawtooth Mountain  
By the clear and dashing brooks,  
Where the little crystal fountains  
Seek out sequestered nooks,  
And the great spruce tree and pine  
Stand out their endless guard,  
In majestic, never-ending line,  
With naught their beauty marred.

The squirrel there with his chatter  
Doth all the silence break,  
And then, with gentle patter  
His homeward way doth make;  
His home is in the mighty spruce  
Nearby the quiet lake,  
Where it lies in silence and recluse,  
Its many streams to make.

And, over all, the rocky crags,  
Reach up to touch the sky;  
Not one, of all, its great head sags,  
But all the world defy.  
The eagle sits upon a rocky crest,  
And sends his scream afar,  
And there he makes his cozy nest,  
With the moon his guiding star.



By the shallow lakes and pools  
The wild duck holds his own,  
And there from all marauders safe to rule  
And guard his wildwood home;  
And there at every springtime  
There creeps from out his lair,  
And up to berried hilltops climbs  
A lean and lonesome bear.

And sometimes there a bobbing hare,  
Is very often found,  
And then the mole away from care  
In his burrow in the ground;  
The chipmunk comes from hollow stump  
And chirps a little song,  
And then begins to run and jump,  
And with a whisk, is gone.

Away up there on that lake shore,  
Man doth seldom go,  
For where's the man on office floor,  
Who it's pleasures really know?  
The wild deer there could tell him things,  
That every man should know—  
Of where the sweetest robin sings,  
And purest waters flow.

This timid deer could also tell  
    Of flowers of every hue,  
Of forest path and ferny dell,  
    With columbines and dew;  
Of mossy banks of softest down  
    That well might please a king,  
To him, a man of great renown,  
    This would new pleasures bring.

And 'tis there the air is clearest,  
    In the forest's dreamy isles,  
'Tis there that one is nearest  
    Nature's bright and peaceful smiles;  
'Tis there I always want to be,  
    At dawn of every day,  
From there I'd never, never flee,  
    But there I'd always stay.

### *THOUGHTS*

My thoughts are out some lonely night,  
    In the big pine woods so dark,  
Where the skulking coyote in his flight,  
    Snaps out his mournful bark.  
Where the lone wolf howls from lonely crag,  
    Of the bitterness of life;  
And a bleak, white moon up overhead,  
    O'erlooks a world of strife.

## *THE INDIAN*

Heap big chief with braids of hair,  
Trailing down your shoulder,  
A remnant of a dying race,  
And ever growing older.

Be you Ute, Piute, Comanche,  
Cherokee or Sioux,  
You cling to all the customs,  
Your fathers left to you.

You love your beaded leather,  
Your silver trinkets too,  
You love your flashy blankets,  
Of every shade and hue.

Soon you will join your fathers,  
On the other shore,  
And hunt the bear and bison,  
As in the days of yore.

Now you live a peaceful life,  
'Neath the arm of Uncle Sam,  
But you're fast becoming fewer,  
A dying race of man.

## THE MOONSHINER

In the moonlight of the long summer night,  
By the stream in the canon's fold,  
A lone man sits in the dim fire light,  
With his gun on his knees as of old.

A ruddy glow from the smouldering fire,  
Lights up the lines of his face,  
No passerby comes up to inquire,  
What he does in this lonely place.

As thus he sits and hums a tune,  
A ranger creeps through the trees.  
The glint of a star in the light of the moon,  
The slightest rustle in the breeze.

A sharp command, a pair of cuffs,  
Soon the man is alone once more,  
This time he's not 'neath rocky bluffs,  
But he looks out through an iron barred  
door.

This story goes for the moonshine men,  
They're all caught soon or late,  
Then the county jail or the stately pen,  
And the wall with the tight locked gate.

## *THE COLUMBINE*

The fairest of flowers,  
Mid spruce and pine,  
The rarest of flowers,  
Is the Columbine.

In the depth of the forest,  
Near shrub and near vine,  
You grow in profusion,  
Dainty Columbine.

A background of purple,  
Delicately fine,  
A star of pure white,  
In the Columbine.

You bloom on the hillside,  
In unending line,  
And bloom by the brookside,  
Pretty Columbine.

Toss your head high in the breeze,  
And grow in the golden sunshine,  
The fairest of Nature's flow'rs,  
You're the Columbine.

## FLAG DAY

Oh the red, the white and the blue  
    Waving proud and high,  
A splash of colored motion,  
    As seen against the sky.

The emblem of the greatest nation,  
    And second now to none,  
The stars and stripes of old glory  
    Shine beneath God's sun.

Today's the birthday of Old Glory,  
    Let us celebrate the day,  
When this glorious flag was born to wave,  
    And brighten up our way.

The stars and stripes that wave on high,  
    Tell stories of hardships rare,  
Of men who died to save that flag,  
    And keep it flying there.

So let us revere our flag today,  
    Let it wave through all the days;  
We'll all take off our hats to her,  
    And bid her wave always.



## *TO THE CLIFF DWELLER*

Here's to the man who built this house  
And laid these stones in place,  
To make a decent living room,  
For a long departed race.

Here's to the man who scaled these cliffs,  
To caves at dizzy height,  
He was the bravest of brave men,  
Tho he never sought a fight.

Here's to the man who once lived here,  
We know not where he's gone,  
But he left his home on the cliffs,  
For the world to ponder on.

Small of stature, he had no tools,  
He walked where e'er he went,  
His house was perched high on a cliff,  
Where part of life was spent.

He wrote no history of his life,  
And left no written pages,  
His dead he left in silent rooms,  
To sleep the sleep of ages.

## *A FRIEND HAS PASSED AWAY*

I heard the news in the morning,  
It saddened me all the day,  
For in the night while I slumbered,  
A friend was passing away.

I saw them tenderly lay him away,  
And all his praises say,  
For all who knew him, had loved  
My friend who had passed away.

Some day when the twilight comes,  
The closing of the day;  
I hope the world can say of me,  
A friend has passed away.

## *MEMORIAL DAY*

Today we honor those who served,  
In the days that distant are,  
Today we honor the soldier dead,  
That since have crossed the bar.  
Today we stand with drooping heads,  
And many shed a tear,  
In memory of departed ones,  
That we still hold so dear.

## *EVENING*

When the golden sun has gone to sleep,  
    In its haven in the west  
When the cooling shadows lengthen,  
    And the world drops down to rest.  
Then the birds sing in the treetops,  
    Their peaceful evening tune,  
And the lowing of the cattle,  
    Tells that night is coming soon.

All the land is peace and quiet,  
    Every flower rests secure,  
In the heart of Nature's bosom,  
    Fed by waters cold and pure:  
The purple sunsets linger,  
    In the pink and golden sky,  
And the darkness of the evening,  
    Comes down from out the sky.

## *WHISTLE*

I like to see a feller  
    That whistles all the day,  
It makes life more like livin'  
    It brightens up the way.

## COLORADO

There's a land of wondrous beauty,  
In the golden mountain west,  
Where rest the peaceful valleys,  
With Heaven's beauty blessed.

There mountains meet the azure skies,  
And golden sunsets glow,  
While snow capped peaks keep watch near by,  
O'er the peaceful scenes below.

There's a land of snowy mountains,  
In the great unbroken west,  
Where springs and bubbling fountains,  
Hold Nature at her best.

There's a land of windswept ridges,  
Of gullies deep and long,  
Where wolves through endless ages ,  
Have howled a mournful song.

There's a land of gentle breezes,  
Of rich and grassy hills,  
Where every flower pleases  
The heart that Nature thrills.

A smiling sun shines down on all,  
From Heaven's stately dome,  
And Nature's wondrous beauties call  
Me back to home sweet home.

### *TO THE MOUNTAIN GOAT*

Oh, little woolly mountain goat,  
I saw you proudly stand,  
On yon lofty pinnacle,  
And gaze out o'er the land.

And little woolly mountain goat,  
How I envied you,  
As you perched up on that dizzy point,  
As only you could do.

You are as free as the eagle,  
That soars o'er high above,  
You roam around and live your life,  
There in the land you love.

And as I often see you  
Up where the white clouds float,  
It fills my heart with envy,  
For the little mountain goat.

## *THE SHIP OF LIFE*

Oh! ship of life  
On wrathful seas,  
Dost thou sail on  
With modest ease?

The skies are dark,  
The high seas roar,  
The lightnings flash,  
At Heaven's door.

Or is thy path,  
Through choppy waves,  
Where tempests blow,  
And billows rave?

When storm has cleared,  
It blows no more,  
The Sun lights up,  
A golden shore.

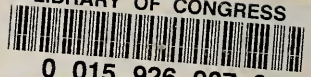
At times, fond hopes,  
The seas are rough,  
The wind blows hard,  
Beneath the bluff.

The ship sails on,  
The day is bright,  
The sun has pierced,  
The darkest night.





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